COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Available data indicate that reduction in revenue of the Deptt. of Telecom Services (including MTNL) due to tariff rebalancing in the financial year 1999-2000 is likely to be approx. Rs. 2000 crores.

(d) and (e) Separate data for traffic from high-end users is not maintained. Sample data available does not indicate any increases in the total volume of traffic.

Constitution of a dispute settlement system in the field of Telecommunications

†485. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to constitute a suitable dispute settlement system like "Lok Adalat" for resolving disputes between licensing authority and license holders in the field of telecommunications, to facilitate speedy disposal of disputes outside court;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Prior to its amendment by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Ordinance, 2000 promulgated on 24th Jan. 2000, the TRAI Act 1997 had *inter alia* provided for limited adjudicatory functions to be performed by TRAI, which did not cover the settlement of licensor-licensee disputes.

With a view to strengthen the regulatory framework in the telecommunications sector, Government promulgated the above mentioned ordinance on 24th Jan. 2000. As a result of the amendments brought about to the TRAI Act 1997, the dispute settlement mechanism has been restructured and strengthened. Chapter IV of the TRAI Act 1997, under which TRAI had got limited adjudicatory powers, has been replaced, to provide for the establishment of a separate disputes redressal body, known as the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

"Telecom Disputes Settlement Appellate Tribunal", to adjudicate any dispute between a licensor and a licensee, between two or more service providers, between a service provider and a group of consumers, and to hear and dispose of appeals against any direction, decision or orders of TRAI. Appeals against the orders of the said Tribunal shall lie to the Supreme Court, as specified in the relevant provisions of the amended TRAI Act 1997.

Clearance of outstanding dues of cellular licence fee

486. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to extend the last date for payment of cellular licence fee arrears from January, 31st to March 15, 2000;

(b) if so, the names of the defaulting operators and arrears outstanding against each of them; and

(c) the reasons for giving extension of the date for clearing their dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The position of license fee arrears as on date is indicated in statement. (*See* below).

(c) There are certain problems of cellular industry for which the Industry had been making representations, *inter-alia*, for grant of extension of time. After examining the issues involved, and with a view to mitigate the problems faced by the industry, the Government has decided to extend the dates for securitisation and payment of outstanding dues upto 29.02.2000 and 15.03.2000 respectively beyond the dates (30.11.99 and 31.01.2000) originally indicated for the same in the migration package, but with imposition of additional penalities.